

Given the growing public perception that seafood harvested in Gulf waters is not safe to eat, U.S. Congressman Allen Boyd (D-North Florida) today [sent a letter to the President](#) calling on him to establish a seafood safety task force. The task force will assure commercial seafood products harvested in areas of the Gulf affected by the BP oil spill are safe for consumption.

“Our fishermen – along with a host of other small businesses and industries on the Gulf Coast – have enough challenges on their plate at the moment, and unfounded perceptions that their product is not safe will only make matters worse,” said Congressman Boyd. “We must take action to counter these misperceptions and set the record straight. This task force will help provide added confidence to consumers that the seafood harvested in the Gulf is safe, clean and ready to eat. I will continue fighting to ensure that this message gets distributed loud and clear and am hopeful the President will act on this request soon.”

The task force will track the current and anticipated movements of the spill, monitor water quality in and around areas affected by the oil spill, and help develop new protocols for opening and closing of Gulf fisheries. Congressman Boyd suggested to the President that the task force be comprised of representatives from the National Marine Fisheries Service, National Seafood Inspection Laboratory, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference.

Today’s letter builds on Congressman Boyd’s commitment to speed clean-up and containment efforts in the Gulf and ensure that local communities receive economic relief as quickly as possible.

Earlier today Congressman Boyd voted to prevent any disruption to the clean-up and containment efforts currently underway in the Gulf by authorizing the federal government to provide advance funding from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to sustain and support these activities. The legislation calls for BP to repay the full cost of this advance funding.

Last month, Congressman Boyd sponsored legislation that would hold oil companies fully accountable for the economic damage caused by oil spills. Oil companies are already responsible for the full cost of environmental clean-up efforts. Boyd’s legislation would raise the current cap from \$75 million to \$10 billion, ensuring that oil companies – and not the taxpayers – bear the cost for all economic damages resulting from oil spills.

Additionally, on Monday, June 14, Congressman Boyd will convene local, state and federal officials and key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive, federal preparedness and recovery plan in preparation for a possible hurricane or tropical storm striking the Gulf Coast in the coming months. The plan will specifically take into account the unique circumstances posed by having oil in Gulf waters and will seek to establish a military and civilian command and control structure to coordinate what actions need to be taken before, during and after a possible storm. The conference will take place at Florida State University-Panama City campus.

More information about Congressman Boyd’s efforts can be found at www.boyd.house.gov.

###

[*Read Congressman Allen Boyd's letter sent to the President on June 10, 2010.*](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 10, 2010

CONTACT:

Christopher Cashman, 202-225-5235